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General Assembly

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Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Organization of work: relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly

Note by the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The attention of the Special Committee is drawn to the resolutions and the decision adopted by the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session, as listed in sections II to IV below, that are relevant to the work of the Special Committee in 2012.

II. General resolutions on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

2. The Special Committee was established by the General Assembly pursuant to its resolution 1654 (XVI) of 27 November 1961. The Special Committee was requested to examine the application of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, and to make suggestions and recommendations on the progress and extent of the implementation of the Declaration.

3. By its resolution 1970 (XVIII) of 16 December 1963, the General Assembly decided to dissolve the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories, and requested the Special Committee to study the information transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations.

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4. At the same session and at each subsequent session, the General Assembly, after considering the report of the Special Committee,[1] adopted a resolution renewing the mandate of the Special Committee.

5. At its thirty-fifth session, the General Assembly, on the basis of a recommendation of the Special Committee, adopted resolution 35/118 of 11 December 1980, the annex to which contains the Plan of Action for the Full Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

6. At its forty-third session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 43/47 of 22 November 1988, by which it declared the period 1990-2000 the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

7. At its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly, in its resolution 46/181 of 19 December 1991, adopted as a plan of action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism the proposals contained in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General dated 13 December 1991 (A/46/634/Rev.1 and Corr.1). The plan stated that the Special Committee, with the cooperation of the administering Powers, should:

(a) Prepare periodic analyses of the progress and extent of the implementation of the Declaration;

(b) Review the impact of the economic and social situation on the constitutional and political advancement of Non-Self-Governing Territories;

(c) Organize during the Decade seminars in the Caribbean and Pacific regions alternately, as well as at United Nations Headquarters, to review the progress achieved in the implementation of the plan of action, with the participation of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, their elected representatives, the administering Powers, Member States, regional organizations, specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and experts.

In addition, the Special Committee was to continue to seek, as a matter of priority, the full cooperation of the administering Powers with regard to the dispatch of United Nations visiting missions to Non-Self-Governing Territories and, with the cooperation of the administering Powers, was to make every effort to facilitate and encourage the participation of representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories in regional and international organizations, as well as in the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the Special Committee itself and other United Nations decolonization bodies.

8. At its fifty-fifth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 55/146 of 8 December 2000, declaring the period 2001-2010 the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, and called upon Member States to redouble their efforts to implement the plan of action, as contained in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General dated 13 December 1991 (A/46/634/Rev.1 and Corr.1), updated where necessary, to serve as the plan of action for the Second Decade. The updated plan of action is contained in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General on the Second Decade (A/56/61).

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[1] See the reports of the Special Committee submitted to the General Assembly at its twentieth to sixty-sixth sessions. For the most recent, see A/63/23, A/64/23 and Corr.2, A/65/23 and Corr.1, and A/66/23.

9. At its sixty-fifth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 65/119 of 10 December 2010, in which it declared the period 2011-2020 the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, and called upon Member States to intensify their efforts to continue to implement the plan of action for the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (A/56/61, annex) and to cooperate with the Special Committee in updating it as necessary, with a view to using it as the basis for a plan of action for the Third International Decade.

10. At its sixty-sixth session, on 9 December 2011, the General Assembly, after considering the report of the Special Committee (A/66/23), adopted resolution 66/91, in which it approved the report of the Special Committee covering its work during 2011, including the programme of work envisaged for 2012, and requested the Special Committee to continue to seek suitable means for the immediate and full implementation of the Declaration, and in particular:

(a) To formulate specific proposals to bring about an end to colonialism and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session;

(b) To continue to examine the implementation by Member States of resolution 1514 (XV) and other relevant resolutions on decolonization;

(c) To continue to examine the political, economic and social situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, and to recommend, as appropriate, to the General Assembly the most suitable steps to be taken to enable the populations of those Territories to exercise their right to self-determination, including independence, in accordance with the relevant resolutions on decolonization, including resolutions on specific Territories;

(d) To develop and finalize, as soon as possible and in cooperation with the administering Power and the Territory in question, a constructive programme of work on a case-by-case basis for the Non-Self-Governing Territories to facilitate the implementation of the mandate of the Special Committee and the relevant resolutions on decolonization, including resolutions on specific Territories;

(e) To continue to dispatch visiting and special missions to the Non-Self-Governing Territories in accordance with the relevant resolutions on decolonization, including resolutions on specific Territories;

(f) To conduct seminars, as appropriate, for the purpose of receiving and disseminating information on the work of the Special Committee, and to facilitate participation by the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in those seminars;

(g) To take all steps necessary to enlist worldwide support among Governments, as well as national and international organizations, for the achievement of the objectives of the Declaration and the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations;

(h) To observe annually the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories (see General Assembly resolution 54/91).

In addition, the General Assembly reaffirmed that the United Nations visiting missions to the Territories were an effective means of ascertaining the situation in the Territories, as well as the wishes and aspirations of their inhabitants, and called upon the administering Powers to continue to cooperate with the Special Committee

in the discharge of its mandate and to facilitate visiting missions to the Territories, and also called upon all the administering Powers to cooperate fully in the work of the Special Committee and to participate formally in the Committee's future sessions.

11. As at 1 January 2012, the Special Committee was composed of the following 29 members: Antigua and Barbuda, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chile, China, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Mali, Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea, the Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sierra Leone, the Syrian Arab Republic, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

III. Resolutions and decision concerning specific items considered by the Special Committee in 2011

12. In addition to resolution 66/91, the General Assembly adopted 10 other resolutions and 1 decision relating to specific items considered by the Special Committee in 2011, which are listed below. Members will wish to take them into account in drawing up the Special Committee's programme of work for 2012.

A. Resolutions and decision concerning specific Territories

1. Resolutions

Territory	*Resolution number*	*Date of adoption*
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	58/316[a]	1 July 2004
Western Sahara	66/86	9 December 2011
New Caledonia	66/87	9 December 2011
Tokelau	66/88	9 December 2011
American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, Turks and Caicos Islands, United States Virgin Islands	66/89 A and B	9 December 2011

[a] In accordance with paragraph 4 (b) of the annex to resolution 58/316 of 1 July 2004, the item should remain in the agenda for consideration upon notification by a Member State.

2. Decision

Territory	*Decision number*	*Date of adoption*
Gibraltar	66/522	9 December 2011

B. Resolutions concerning other items

Title	*Resolution number*	*Date of adoption*
Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations	66/82	9 December 2011
Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories	66/83	9 December 2011
Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations	66/84	9 December 2011
Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories	66/85	9 December 2011
Dissemination of information on decolonization	66/90	9 December 2011

IV. Other resolutions relevant to the work of the Special Committee

13. Other resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session that are relevant to the work of the Special Committee are listed below.

Title	*Resolution number*	*Date of adoption*
Oceans and the law of the sea	66/231	24 December 2011
Questions relating to information	66/81 A and B	9 December 2011
Universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination	66/45	19 December 2011
The right to development	66/155	19 December 2011

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Organization of work

Note by the Chair

I. Subsidiary bodies

1. During its previous sessions, the Special Committee conducted its work by considering the items before it directly at its plenary meetings. The meetings of the Bureau are open to all members of the Special Committee. The Special Committee has increasingly relied on informal consultations, thus striving to keep the number of its formal meetings to a minimum.

2. The Chair recommends to the Special Committee that it continue to use informal meetings to the maximum extent possible. In the meantime, the Chair may wish to discuss urgent as well as specific issues with the Bureau.

II. Allocation of items and procedure for consideration

3. Annexed to the present note is a list of pending matters for consideration by the Special Committee during 2012. It includes decisions adopted by the Special Committee together with an indication of the procedure that the Committee may wish to adopt for each item. In this regard, the Chair would like to draw the particular attention of the Special Committee to paragraph 7 (d) of General Assembly resolution 66/91, in which the Special Committee was requested to develop and finalize, as soon as possible and in cooperation with the administering Power and the Territory in question, a constructive programme of work on a case-by-case basis for the Non-Self-Governing Territories to facilitate implementation of the mandate of the Special Committee and the relevant resolutions on decolonization, including resolutions on specific Territories.

4. The Special Committee should take into account the resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session that are relevant to the work of the Committee, as listed in the note by the Secretary-General on the subject

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(A/AC.109/2012/L.1). It is also understood that the Special Committee should be guided by General Assembly resolution 65/119, in which Member States were called upon to intensify their efforts to continue to implement the plan of action for the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism[1] and to cooperate with the Special Committee in updating the plan, as necessary, with a view to using it as the basis for a plan of action for the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

III. Order of priority for consideration of items

5. The Chair will hold consultations with regard to the order of priority to be given for the consideration of items in plenary meetings and on specific activities envisaged under the plan of action for the Third International Decade.

6. In the meantime, it is suggested that the Special Committee conduct its substantive work in accordance with the schedule of meetings approved by the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session.[2]

IV. Recommendations of the Special Committee to the General Assembly

7. In accordance with established practice, it is suggested that the Committee continue to formulate its decisions in General Assembly form and to submit them to the Assembly at its sixty-seventh session. The Special Committee may also wish to recommend that its Rapporteur continue to follow the established format of its report to the Assembly.

V. Utilization of conference-servicing resources

8. At its sixty-sixth session, the General Assembly decided to waive rules 67 and 108 of its rules of procedure in order to permit meetings to be declared open and debates to proceed without the presence of the quorum required under those rules. The Assembly also decided that morning meetings should begin at 10 a.m.

9. As those measures have further enhanced the effective utilization of conference-servicing resources, it is suggested that the Special Committee continue to follow the same procedure. It should be understood that, in accordance with the rules cited, the presence of a majority of the members would continue to be required for any decisions to be taken.

[1] A/56/61, annex.

[2] See A/66/23, chap. I, para. 30.

Annex

A. Pending matters for consideration by the Special Committee during 2012

Question	*Procedure for consideration*
Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories (General Assembly resolution 2911 (XXVII), decision 37/421 and resolution 66/91)	As appropriate
Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (General Assembly resolution 65/119 and report of the Secretary-General (A/56/61, annex))	
Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations and related questions (General Assembly resolution 66/82)	As a separate item
Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories (General Assembly resolution 66/83)	
Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations (General Assembly resolution 66/84)	
Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories (General Assembly resolution 66/85)	
Falkland Islands (Malvinas) (General Assembly resolution 58/316, annex, sect. D, para. 4 (b))	
Gibraltar (General Assembly decision 66/522)	
Western Sahara (General Assembly resolution 66/86)	
New Caledonia (General Assembly resolution 66/87)	
Tokelau (General Assembly resolution 66/88)	
American Samoa (General Assembly resolution 66/89 A and B)	

Question	*Procedure for consideration*
Anguilla (General Assembly resolution 66/89 A and B)	
Bermuda (General Assembly resolution 66/89 A and B)	
British Virgin Islands (General Assembly resolution 66/89 A and B)	
Cayman Islands (General Assembly resolution 66/89 A and B)	
Guam (General Assembly resolution 66/89 A and B)	
Montserrat (General Assembly resolution 66/89 A and B)	
Pitcairn (General Assembly resolution 66/89 A and B)	
Saint Helena (General Assembly resolution 66/89 A and B)	
Turks and Caicos Islands (General Assembly resolution 66/89 A and B)	
United States Virgin Islands (General Assembly resolution 66/89 A and B)	
Question of sending visiting missions to Territories (General Assembly resolution 66/91, paras. 7 (e) and 14)	
Compliance of Member States with the Declaration and other relevant resolutions on decolonization (General Assembly resolution 66/91, para. 7 (b))	To be taken into consideration in the examination of specific Territories
Dissemination of information on decolonization (General Assembly resolution 66/90)	As appropriate
Special Committee decision of 21 June 2010 concerning Puerto Rico (A/66/23, para. 25)	
Question of holding a series of meetings away from Headquarters (A/AC.109/2011/L.14, paras. 2 and 3)	
Question of the list of Territories to which the Declaration is applicable (A/AC.109/2011/L.14, para. 9)	

B. Tentative programme of work and timetable of the Special Committee

Thursday, 23 February (1 meeting)	Organization of work
March and April (dates to be determined) (2 meetings)	Organization of the forthcoming Pacific Regional Seminar
Monday-Friday, 11-15 June (5 meetings)	Dissemination of information on decolonization
	Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations
	Question of sending visiting missions to Territories
	Question of Gibraltar
Monday, 18 June (2 meetings)	Special Committee decision of 21 June 2010 concerning Puerto Rico: hearing of petitioners
Tuesday, 19 June (1 meeting)	Question of Western Sahara
	Question of New Caledonia
	Questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands
Wednesday, 20 June (1 meeting)	Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations
	Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories
	Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples
Thursday, 21 June (1 meeting)	Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)
Friday, 22 June (1 meeting)	Question of Tokelau
	Report of the Pacific Regional Seminar
	Report of the Special Committee: adoption of recommendations